

CIA 8-02

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Congress and the CIA

Senator Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota and Representative Clement Zablocki of Wisconsin are among the long-time advocates of a bipartisan congressional watchdog committee to keep an eye on America's secret intelligence agencies. Zablocki introduced his first bill on this subject in 1953 and is renewing his proposal this year. He believes the proposal has a chance of succeeding now.

Whether or not Congress decides to act, the subject deserves continued discussion and consideration. No one questions the necessity for the Central Intelligence Agency, the main cog in this country's secret intelligence apparatus. Many responsible persons, however, do question the independent operations of

the CIA in "foreign intrigues which are invisible to the American people yet which may profoundly affect the prospects of war and peace."

CIA involvement in the politics of South Vietnam and other parts of Southeast Asia has run deep, but the public and the Congress have only hints and suggestions as to the nature of these activities and whether they have helped or hindered America's position. Granted that a great deal of secrecy is necessary, it still would not be unreasonable for a bipartisan committee of Senators and Representatives to have direct channels of communication with CIA.

Congress has successfully used this method of keeping in touch with secret nuclear developments through its joint atomic energy committee.